



**NADJA SALERNO-SONNENBERG TO STEP DOWN AS MUSIC DIRECTOR OF  
NEW CENTURY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA AFTER 2016-2017 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SEASON**

**San Francisco, CA – January 19, 2016** – New Century Chamber Orchestra announced today that Music Director Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg will step down from her role as Music Director following the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in 2016-2017.



Appointed in September 2008, Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg led New Century through an exciting period of growth over the course of eight highly successful seasons. Through her leadership, the orchestra founded a Featured Composer program, commissioning a total of eight new works and expanding the string orchestra repertoire; embarked upon three extensive national tours garnering record-breaking audiences and national critical acclaim; recorded three live recordings on Nadja’s own NSS music label; cultivated vibrant partnerships with some of the Bay Area’s most celebrated arts organizations such as the San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Girls Chorus and Chanticleer; and further enhanced the orchestra’s national footprint through a rapidly increased national radio presence.

“It is with a heavy heart that I leave a place so dear to me but I do so knowing New Century will welcome a new leader from a position of strength and acclaim,” said Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg. “From the very first moment I interacted with the orchestra, the chemistry was palpable and although there were challenges ahead, we pressed forward and began a growth process that never wavered. Without a single doubt in my mind, I feel assured of a bright future for this orchestra.”

In addition to her appearances with orchestras and recital concerts, Salerno-Sonnenberg will turn her focus to teaching the next generation of musicians following her recent appointment as the leader of the newly formed Resident Artist Program at Loyola University’s School of Music in New Orleans. She will also work with string orchestras at Universities around the country.

Executive Director Philip Wilder and the New Century Board of Directors have initiated a strategic process, creating a search committee dedicated to identifying the next stage of New Century’s artistic leadership. During this extensive process, Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg will continue as Music Director through the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in 2016-2017 with guest concertmasters featuring in subsequent seasons until a successor has been appointed. Consisting of members of the Board, musicians and staff, the newly formed search committee will be led by Founding President Paula Gambis.

“The impact of Nadja’s tenure as Music Director is incalculable and her achievements are many,” said President of the Board of Directors Mark Salkind. “After nearly a decade of extraordinary leadership, New Century has risen to a new height of artistic excellence and acclaim. Thanks to her hard work and dedication, we are confident that our search for a successor will attract an illustrious pool of candidates.”

As one of the leading violinists of her generation, Salerno-Sonnenberg’s career began when she won the 1981 Walter W. Naumburg International Violin Competition which she followed up two years later with an Avery Fisher Career Grant and later in 1999 the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize. A powerful and creative presence on the recording scene, Nadja has released over 20 recordings on EMI and Nonesuch labels as well as working with an extensive roster of musicians on her own NSS label including her most recent New Century release

“From A to Z” (May 2014) featuring commissioned works by Clarice Assad, William Bolcom, Michael Daugherty and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich.

## **NEW CENTURY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA 2015-2016 SEASON CALENDAR**

### **Hope for Menuhin**

**February 4-7, 2016**

Open Rehearsal: Wednesday, February 3, 10 a.m., Kanbar Performing Arts Center, San Francisco

Thursday, February 4, 8 p.m., First Congregational Church, Berkeley

Friday, February 5, 8 p.m., First United Methodist Church, Palo Alto

Saturday, February 6, 8 p.m., Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Sunday, February 7, 5 p.m., Osher Marin JCC, San Rafael

**J. S. Bach**: Concerto in D Minor for 2 Violins, Strings and Basso Continuo, BWV 1043

**Pärt**: “*Darf ich...*” Solo violin, Tubular Bells and Strings

**Philip Glass**: “*Echorus*” for 2 Violins and Strings

**Mendelssohn**: Concerto in D minor for Violin and Strings

**Vivaldi**: Concerto in A minor for 2 Violins, RV 522

**El-Khoury**: *Unfinished Journey* – in memorium Yehudi Menuhin

**Takemitsu**: *Nostalgia* for Solo Violin and Strings

**Bartók**: Six Romanian Folk Dances

### **Delight in Dancing**

**May 5-8, 2016**

Open Rehearsal: May 4, 10 a.m., Kanbar Performing Arts Center, San Francisco

Thursday, May 5, 8 p.m., First Congregational Church, Berkeley

Friday, May 6, 8 p.m., First United Methodist Church, Palo Alto

Saturday, May 7, 8 p.m., Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Sunday, May 8, 5 p.m., Osher Marin JCC, San Rafael

**Stravinsky**: *Apollon musagète*

**Jennifer Higdon**: World Premiere Commission

**Strauss**: *Dance of the Seven Veils* from *Salome*

**Khachaturian**: *Sabre Dance*

## **ABOUT NEW CENTURY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA**

The New Century Chamber Orchestra, one of only a handful of conductorless ensembles in the world, was founded in 1992 by cellist Miriam Perkoff and violist Wieslaw Pogorzelski. The 19-member string ensemble, including San Francisco Bay Area musicians and those who travel from across the U.S. and Europe to perform together, makes musical decisions collaboratively. World-renowned violin soloist, chamber musician and recording artist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg leads from the concertmaster chair. She joined the ensemble as music director and concertmaster in January 2008, bringing to New Century “a new sense of vitality and determination, as well as an audacious swagger that is an unmistakable fingerprint of its leader,” according to *Gramophone* magazine. This season marks her seventh with the orchestra and continues an illustrious line of concertmasters including Stuart Canin (1992-1999) and Krista Bennion Feeney (1999-2006).

In addition to performing classic pieces of chamber orchestra repertoire and commissioning new work, New Century breathes new life into rarely heard jewels of the past and performs world premieres. Salerno-Sonnenberg and New Century have made three successful national tours together. The 2011 performances in

the Midwest, East Coast, and Southern California garnered record-breaking audiences and national critical acclaim. In January and February 2013, New Century followed with a highly successful eight-state national tour, the largest and most ambitious artistic undertaking in the organization's history. In addition to touring efforts, New Century's national footprint has also continued to grow with a rapidly increasing national radio presence.

The orchestra has released seven compact discs, the most recent its *From A to Z: 21st Century Concertos*. The orchestra's first concert DVD, *On Our Way: Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and the New Century Chamber Orchestra*, released in May 2012, weaves together documentary footage and concert footage from a February 2011 performance at the Broad Stage in Santa Monica.

For more information on New Century, please visit <http://www.ncco.org>.

#### **PHOTO CREDITS**

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